

XIV. *Of the Gillaroo Trout. A Letter from the Hon. Daines Barrington, to the Rev. Dr. Horsley.*

DEAR SIR,

Redd, Dec. 23, 1773. **Y**OU will find upon the table a Gillaroo trout, as it is termed in Ireland, the peculiarity of which is, that the stomach very much resembles the gizzard of a bird.

The first time I ever happened to hear of these singular fish, was from an Irish Judge, who being on the Connaught circuit at Ballynrobe, in the county of Mayo, expressed his incredulity with regard to their existence, but was obliged to pay the common Irish wager, of a rump of beef and a dozen of claret, on three or four being produced the next day from a neighbouring lake.

Since that time I have endeavoured to procure a specimen, with the entrails adhering, and have at last succeeded, the stomach upon the table having been extracted by Mr. HUNTER, F. R. S. in the presence of several.

I do not find that any ichthyologist takes notice of such a part belonging to fish, except GOUAN *, who says, that the ventricle, of some sorts, resembles the gizzard of fowls, by being partly fleshy and partly membranous: GOUAN, however, does

* Philosophia Ichthyologica, p. 80.

not

not specify the species of fish, which hath such a stomach.

No mention is made by any naturalist of this *variety* in the trout; nor is it noticed in the collection of tracts for illustrating the natural history of Ireland, which was published in 1727, though their lakes and rivers are particularly described.

If the specimen, now shewn to the Society, was a single one, it might be considered as an accident; but there can be no doubt, of trouts being constantly caught, with this extraordinary stomach, in some of the Irish lakes, though the greater part indeed do not differ from the common sorts: I have therefore been informed by Lord Louth, that he hath seen a small dish, consisting merely of such gizzards at an Irish table in Galway, and I could corroborate this fact, was it necessary, by the testimony of an Irish Archbishop.

There are no exterior marks by which the specimen on the table can be distinguished from the common trout; but I have shewn the stomach to Everet of Clare-Market, a very intelligent fishmonger, who declares, that though he hath cut up thousands of trouts and salmons, he never observed any thing similar in the inside.

Mr. HUNTER opened a charr, which is scarcely distinguishable from a trout in it's outward appearance, and found the *poke*, as our fishmongers call it, very different; you will find however the stomach of a common trout upon the table, which may be compared with that of the Gillaroo, though it is admitted to be a bad specimen.

I have been informed that the term *Gillaroo* signifies a *gizzard* in the Irish language; but as I

cannot find any such word in Lhuyd's Irish Dictionary, possibly it may be only a corruption of Killaloe *, near which town such trouts are caught.

The *poke* of the Gillaroo seems to perform the office of a gizzard, because several small snails were found within the present specimen, and I conclude, that this species of food abounds in the lake, which this *variety* of trout frequents.

By the best information I can procure, they are more common in LOUGH CORRYB, and the lakes of GALWAY, than the other waters of Ireland: they are also caught in LOUGH DERN, through which the SHANNON runs: I inclose however some memoranda relative to the Gillaroo trouts, which Mr. WALSH, F. R. S. was so good as to make for me, whilst he was, last summer, in Ireland, some of which he received from an inn-keeper at KILLALOE, and the others from fishermen of LOUGH DERN.

If the particulars, I have stated, happen to prove interesting to the Society, I hope they will do me the honour of giving the specimen a place in their Museum. I am,

DEAR SIR,

Your most faithful humble Servant,

DAINES BARRINGTON.

* Though I do not pretend to understand either the Welsh or Irish languages, yet I know that there is a great affinity betwixt them, in the names for common things.

Now *cylla* signifies the *stomach* in Welsh (see Davis's Dictionary Artic. *Ventriculus*) and *ruadh* is rendered *strong* by Lhuyd, in his Irish Vocabulary: Gillaroo therefore is the *stomach strong*, as the adjective follows the substantive, according to the Welsh idiom, and probably therefore according to the Irish.

P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE I wrote the above, I have this morning procured the pokes of two salmon, one of which weighed 34 lb, and the other 24 pounds. You will observe in these something similar; but though both these fish exceed the Gillaroo trout so much in size, yet the gizzard part is smaller, and is at the same time less muscular. The Gillaroo trout did not probably weigh more than four or five pounds.

MEMORANDA OF MR. WALSH, F. R. S.

Killaloe. October 1, 1773.

Innkeeper's Account.

The Gillaroo or Gizzard trout.

The gizzard of the size of a large chicken: it is white, and excellent eating; vastly broader than a trout of the same length; some of them three feet long; some from twelve to eighteen; the trout itself is bad eating.

They catch many trout, and but few Gillaroos. They have the finest trout in the world.

Lough

Lough Derg. October 2, 1773.

Fishermen's Account.

From May to August, trout of all kind is the most plenty.

The largest Gillaroo is 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ pound; the smallest, 2 pound. There is a red Gillaroo and a white; the last is the smallest, and the better eating. It is white, with black spots on it; the red Gillaroo is red, with black spots on it.

The large Gillaroo have gizzards bigger than a turkey gizzard; they have gravel and little shells in them. Never saw a roe, which is here called a pea, in the Gillaroo, nor a milt. They seldom take a Gillaroo at the spawning season. They are quite different from the other trout; their spots are larger, and fewer.

A very large species of trout, of 20 and 30 pounds weight, called Budhurs, that is, *big*, resemble the red Gillaroo outwardly, but have no gizzards, nor are they broad. Are seldom killed till the latter end of the season; that is, from this time to Christmas.